

Dear Les,

2/16/77

After you left last night I tuned in the news from a Washington independent all-news station - in the middle of the first item. On Gonzalez. For radio news it was a long account - of how Henry mess ed up the JFK original investigation by what he did with Connally's clothes.

Sorry I forgot to recast this, as I had, when we discussed all of it. Also that I forgot another OPR report aspect, on Shaheen.

Long ago, when I was telling others my objections to both Downing and Gonzalez, one with good Capitol Hill connections discussed this with me. Then, before Downing's retirement was effective, he asked me for a detailed memo on Gonzalez' vulnerability if he became chairman, as was then automatic.

Sarah McClendon's long WAVA item last night was the first on my list. I predicted that those agencies who could be hurt by an investigation would use this against Gonzalez and the committee. Gonzalez had taken possession of Connally's clothes, not given them to the FBI, ultimately gave them to Mrs. RFK Connally while still telling no official investigator - none of whom wanted that evidence anyway - and then she laundered them, eliminating the evidence.

Today is the confrontation, making the timing interesting - that it was not used earlier, when the continuation was pending and is use now when Sprague's job is contested.

This is what makes me believe the leak or plant was by the House leadership, not the FBI or CIA. The agencies, which would prefer no investigation to any exposure, would have used it earlier, I think. The exception I can think of is that Sprague is their man and they look for as permanent exculpation by a rigged job. He'd control it. I do not believe this is the probability.

Another reason I believe this came from the memo I prepared for the leadership is the manner of the handling. It was almost exactly as I had done it. There is, of course, the possibility that someone else saw it the same way. But when Gonzalez has been up to this since 1973, I doubt it on the basis of its not having been used earlier.

If there is more and it include the Webermania then you know it is from my memo. If there is this Weberman add and it includes details on him in the drug scene, especially in Washington's suburbs during the original debate on the committee, which I did not include, then it has official participation, either the agencies or the committee's staff.

Gonzalez will go now. One question is will the committee go with him. This does not mean that Sprague is saved. But I can see a mechanism for that because he has the black caucus and they want a King investigation. Cut the budget by eliminating JFK. They could then argue that the job would be simpler, the budget needed would be ever so much less and they can control the smaller investigation. This is in fact one of the few ways there is a chance of saving the committee after all its stupidities and self-destructions. In this there is an inherent defense of Sprague that does not need to be articulated. Everyone knows Gonzalez is a lightweight so some will assume - and others can be told privately - that Sprague had to take charge, had to fill a vacuum, even had to protect the House from what Gonzalez could do to it.

Michale Shaheen should never have taken the job of investigation the FBI in the King case because he used to be "Crae's law clerk and had announced plans to return to Memphis to practise law. No chance if he disagreed with the official account. In addition, there is the conflict from the OPR being part of the same office that is in charge of FOIA compliance and they were withholding records from me in court. So he was also investigating his own office, that of the Deputy AG. He never asked me for any info and acted as a means of sequestering records called for in my suit. He then refused to supply them when we asked for them and filed an affidavit saying he could not because they were not his records. Hastily,